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Racism by any name

The ill-conceived "curfew" announced by the United Front for Black Community Organizations amounts to resegregation of an ugly sort. Even though the original statement was later modified to a large degree, it has contributed to a worsening of race relations in Chicago.

The Rev. C. T. Vivian was less than candid in saying the United Front spoke for 100 black community groups. Several have already disavowed the statement, and Vivian himself now says it was intended to be a "helpful warning" rather than a threat. Yet the statement was quite specific "No whites (it said) will be permitted to enter the black community for any reason during these hours (6 p.m. to 6 a.m.), and those who are in the black community will be expected to leave by the 6 p.m. deadline.

Such a statement cannot help but be self-defeating at a time when the great need is for co-operation and a reduction of the emotional level attained since the two recent shootouts in which two white policemen and two members of the Black Panthers were killed. A threat to cordon off vast areas of the city to all whites goes beyond the exaggerated rhetoric of militancy into action at an escalated level of violence.

The city cannot permit any group to wall itself off, to deny access to or through certain areas on the basis of color of skin. This would be but one step removed from the abhorrent conditions that exist in some troubled parts of the globe — where barbed wire and guard towers separate people of differing religions, nationality or ideology. Chicago must not become a new Berlin or Belfast.

It does not take a long memory, of course, to recall similar threats directed against the blacks. Some Southern towns erected road signs warning Negroes to be gone by sunset. There are some sections of this city and its suburbs where it is not wise for a black man to be seen after dark (just as some areas are dangerous for whites).

But a major effort has been mounted to overcome such instances of prejudice and oppression. And for a time, at least, it seemed to be succeeding. The whole thrust of civil rights legislation has been toward full equality in all things, from schools and lunch counters to the voting booth.

It is understandable that there is impatience with the pace of this progress, which often seems painfully slow. But for the oppressed to adopt the tactics of their oppressors is both ironic and tragic. The United Front is coming dangerously close to a mirror-image of the Ku Klux Klan if it goes down this road.

If some elements in the black community are permitted to declare their neighborhoods off-limits to whites, what is to prevent some elements of the white community from following the reverse plan? Clearly, neither course is tolerable, and the repudiation of both is an urgent necessity.

Both sides must trust them

In proposing a blue ribbon coroner's jury to investigate the death of Black Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, Chicago Bar Assn. President Frank Greenberg said:

"The jury must consist of persons in whose fairness, integrity and open-mindedness the whole community, black and white, can have implicit confidence."

Atty. Kermit Colman of the American Civil Liberties Union, representing one of the Panthers arrested in the raid, said that the criterion for the blacks selected should be their "relevance to the black community."

Certainly they should understand the black community and be sympathetic with its needs and aspirations. But they cannot be advocates, or at any rate lopsided advocates, and still command respect in the white community.

There are in Chicago and its environs a few blacks and a few whites of enough stature to be trusted by all parts of the community. Credibility in the proposed investigation requires that partisanship be set aside and men of that stature be persuaded to serve.

Spruance: Unsung hero

A great and modest American passed quietly from the scene last weekend when Raymond Ames Spruance, Admiral, USN (Ret.), died in California.

While Spruance ranks low on any recognition list of World War II admirals — Halsey, King, Nimitz, Leahy, and Sherman would be far ahead— this quiet, hawk-faced sailor from Indiana was probably more instrumental in securing the victory at sea than any other fighting admiral.

As fleet commander at Midway in the spring of 1942 Spruance crushed the formidable Japanese force and turned the tide of the Pacific war in our favor. As Adm. Nimitz' most trusted commander in the campaigns that spanned the western Pacific from Pearl Harbor to Tokyo it was Spruance, rather than the more spectacular Halsey, who protected the delicate amphibious operations. Halsey, in the raider's role, drew the publicity and the applause, and deserved it. Spruance, who deserved more, was content to leave the glory to others and get on with his job.

History, which itself has a weakness for flamboyance, has been a long time catching up with Adm. Spruance. Perhaps it will do better by his memory.

For the human things

President Nixon's congressional message recommending increases in funds for the arts and humanities must have come as a delightful surprise to millions of Americans. Culture is normally the first to go when budgets are being cut, as some are in Washington these days, and it speaks well for the administration and bodes well for the nation that the President has handsomely acknowledged the importance of the creative and scholarly life.

The President would provide $40,000,000 for the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities in the next fiscal year — about double the sum available this year — and extend its life for three years beyond next June 30, when it is now scheduled to expire. The sum is modest when compared with what is available for other purposes — notably war — but it can go a long way toward bringing art and the humanities directly into the lives of the people. As in the past, the funds would serve to generate appropriations from state, local and private sources, so that the total available would be far more than the federal appropriation.

Nobody wants an "official art," but it hasn't developed so far under the foundation's activities and shouldn't in the future. The program serves to emphasize, as the President said, that this is "the time to enrich the life of the mind and to evoke the splendid qualities of the American spirit." The statement reflects the spirit of many of today's youth who are rejecting the rat race and seeking values in spiritual rather than material avenues.

The federal investment in America's quality of life, as the President said, would return splendidly in "human understanding, human satisfaction . . . grace, beauty and spiritual fulfillment." And somewhere in these areas, with luck, will be found the antidotes to violence and hate.

John Fischetti

Another inflation problem

'Nixon isn't President of the poor'

By Carl T. Rowan

WASHINGTON—Mixing a lot of Dale Carnegie and a bit of Billy Sunday, Richard Milhous Nixon has been a remarkable success at striking an oratorical posture of being the "President of the people."

Rowan

But as Congress winds up its first session under his prodding and guidance, it becomes more and more obvious that when you peel away the rhetoric you find a man who is not inclined to be the President of the poor, the black, the disenfranchised, the aged, the hungry.

Soon the bent will be so clear that hopefully even the least perceptive American will not be fooled by the lofty language of speeches and press conferences.

It was under Mr. Nixon that the government sought, with too much success, to blunt a national crusade for tax reforms. Without shame, but in the name of fiscal responsibility, it sought tax relief for big corporations and the preservation of loopholes that benefit oil interests even as it opposed a $200 increase in the personal income tax exemption and a 15-per cent hike in Social Security—the latter two being measures that would help mostly the poor and the aged.

IT WAS UNDER MR. NIXON that for the first time in decades the government stood up in the Supreme Court arguing on the side of the segregationists.

It was under Mr. Nixon that House Republicans joined Southern Democrats to scuttle the 1965 Voting Rights Act, a measure that gave the vote to almost a million Negroes.

The inevitable result will be new efforts to disenfranchise blacks in the South, a new lowering of the quality of men elected to public office in the South and, of course, increased chances that the Nixon administration's "Southern strategy" will work because the electorate will be more dominated by people inclined to vote for someone like Mr. Nixon.

It was under Mr. Nixon that these same Republicans and Southerners decided that the climate was right to destroy the antipoverty program by turning most of the functions of the Office of Economic Opportunity over to the states.

ONE LOSES ALL DOUBT about the sympathies and intentions of this administration when one observes the contrast in the President's behavior on the Voting Rights Act and his activity (or nonactivity) when OEO found a knife at its throat.

Is it that the President is so intoxicated by his notions of a "new federalism" that he really believes poor people will benefit by turning the antipoverty program over to the states? If so, he can read some of the many reports showing how state control has taken the boldness, the effectiveness, the justice out of other programs for the disadvantaged.

• Here is a quote from "Is It Helping Poor Children?" a report by two private groups.

"The states' unwillingness or inability to administer a large federal program according to the law and in the best interest of poor children should deter any trend to give the states still more control over more programs. . . . With few exceptions, the states lack the ability to administer competently programs in a manner faithful to national policy."

• Here is a comment from the President's National Advisory Council on Education of Disadvantaged Children:

"State distribution of funds rarely, if ever, favors those sections of the state with the greatest concentration and number of educationally deprived children — the central cities."

• Here is what the report "Hunger U.S.A." had to say about the food stamp program and "local control":

"Federal deference to 'local initiative' meant that those counties which traditionally had been least responsive to the need of the poor and hungry were given veto power to prevent the program from reaching its intended beneficiaries."

The history is so appallingly clear that it is impossible to believe that the President and his advisers do not know. The inescapable conclusion is that they do not really care.

Readers support police action

Your views of the news

I think it is disgraceful that the protectors of the people are forced to justify their actions in their role as enforcers of the law. Fighting crime is war and war means kill or be killed when in combat.

I sincerely hope that we do not have a repetition of these biased reports in the future.

CLARE LANGHAMER
Midlothian

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Fred Hampton and the other Black Panthers died as they had lived, violently. This particular group, following the ideology of Moscow, Peking and Havana, are doomed to be eliminated as a detriment to society and victims of their own rage.

They should try to emulate the Black Muslims who are becoming economically sound and preach a good moral cause.

The press, TV, radio, sob sisters and brothers and our churches have been encouraging rioting, looting, unsafe streets, parks, buses and high crime and welfare rates too long.

The police are doing a fine job, hamstrung as they are by false arrest and police brutality charges.

State's Atty. Hanrahan and the Chicago police should be complimented for destroying such mad animals.

CLIFFORD C. HAINES
Chicago

• •

I have noticed the people who are crying about the death of Fred Hampton being a murder are the greatest hypocrites this country has ever known. They think it's all right to shoot and kill police officers, but that it's not all right for police officers to defend themselves when beset by such bandits.

The same hypocrites I mentioned earlier were very silent when the same Black Panther group killed two police officers.

WM. RHODES BENNETT
Crestwood, Ill.

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Why was there no uprising of the blacks (or whites) when police were shot down and a Panther stood over a wounded policeman and pumped his head full of lead, to make sure he was dead?

Are only the Panthers deserving of "rights"? Are there no "rights" for the police or the whites? Do the whites raise their fists in a fighting hate symbol?

Who burned down Madison St. (so soon forgotten) and looted the stores? No shots then. If the whites had done it there would have been a lot of shooting, but not to the "poor" blacks. Oh, no.

A policeman can't drive through the Panther district without a chance of being killed and his car is always shot up. How many police are dead?

So why don't you have the guts to demand an investigation of where the Panthers get all those guns and the money to live on and what are the guns to be used for—playing games?

Chicago — A.W.

'We must sit here and take it'

The worst aspect of such evils as air pollution, DDT and the garbage put on TV is not the actual harm that these things do us; the really galling thing about them is that we just have to take what society dishes out, be it good or bad. Individually, there's nothing we can do about it.

Lombard — THEODORE J. KACZYNSKI

'Things civilized people do not do'

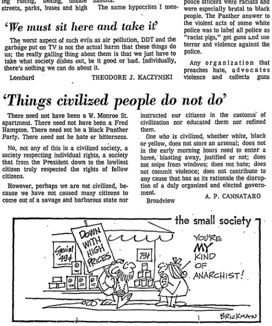
There need not have been a W. Monroe St. apartment. There need not have been a Fred Hampton. There need not be a Black Panther Party. There need not be hate or bitterness.

No, not any of this in a civilized society, a society respecting individual rights, a society that from the President down to the lowliest citizen truly respected the rights of fellow citizens.

However, perhaps we are not civilized, because we have not caused many citizens to come out of a savage and barbarous state nor instructed our citizens in the customs of civilization nor educated them nor refined them.

One who is civilized, whether white, black or yellow, does not store an arsenal; does not in the early morning hours need to enter a home, blasting away, justified or not; does not snipe from windows; does not hate; does not commit violence; does not contribute to any cause that has as its rationale the disruption of a duly organized and elected government.

Broadview — A. P. CANNATARO



'Two wrongs don't make a right'

The Panthers operated on half truths, but no objective person would deny that some police officers were racists and were especially brutal to black people. The Panther answer to the violent acts of some white police was to label all police as "racist pigs," get guns and use terror and violence against the police.

Any organization that preaches hate, advocates violence and collects guns should be closely watched by the police, be it the Panthers or the KKK. A raid on any organization that is storing guns for the purpose of arrest and confiscation is the proper duty of the police.

But a raid designed to kill people because they have guns and radical ideas is police murder which results in the glorification of violence and will give strong credence to the philosophy and growth of the Panthers.

RALPH SCHULER
Oak Park

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I'm appalled at the deaths of the policemen killed by the Black Panthers. I am more shocked and concerned by Hanrahan's tactics. I've never known any law school to teach that two wrongs make a right.

The only difference between Hanrahan's concept of law enforcement and that of Mississippi or any totalitarian government is that of locale — not methods.

If this is his idea of justice, I'll take my chances with the Black Panthers.

Chicago — EARL GREENE

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Any truly defensive action on the part of the police would be understood by most black and white citizens. But it appears that it was the Panthers who had reason to be on the defensive.

MARGARET S. HOLLERMAN
Chicago

• •

How can anyone who cherishes liberty and equality have anything but contempt for "law" which legitimizes incarceration and murder of individuals who oppose a system which has made them a colonized people?

JUNE ANDERSON
De Kalb, Ill.

4:30 a.m. raid time defended

Previous experiences in the black sections of various American towns would cause the Chicago policemen to make their raids on Hampton at 4:30 a.m.

Policemen prefer to avoid confrontation with residents of an area and avoid unnecessary destruction of life and property. Big fracases have occurred as a result of routine police work. One policeman was even attacked while rendering mouth to mouth resuscitation to a black man.

The policemen are expected to perform their jobs according to the rules; if they transgress, prove it in court.

Work solves problems, not emotional shouting. We can turn this nation around with unselfishness (that means you—not somebody else). I salute all individuals who work at being humane rather than black or white.

CLEO HAYNIE
Chicago

Strictly personal

Starvation gap grows each year

By Sydney J. Harris

Harris

The lovely state of Maine has fewer than 1,000,000 inhabitants. What do you suppose would happen to that state if we took all of the 30,000,000 poor people of the United States, crammed them into that state and gave each person a daily food ration of a handful of rice?

This is precisely the condition in the Indian state of West Bengal, as pointed out by Dr. N. J. Berrill, the biologist, in his book, "The Person in the Womb."

In Bengal, millions of children are suffering from "protein starvation." It has been estimated that between 30 and 40 per cent of the children of India have suffered permanent brain damage by the time they reach school age, because of protein deficiency.

AS THE FORMER food minister of India told the Committee on the World Food Crisis not long ago: "This means that we are, in effect, producing subhuman beings at the rate of 35,000,000 a year. By the time they reach school age, they are unable to concentrate sufficiently to absorb and retain knowledge. . . . The millions of rupees spent on new school buildings and facilities have been wasted."

Meanwhile, as Dr. Berrill goes on to say, we are increasing the world's population by 180,000 persons per day. Eighty per cent of the world's people consist of the colored races, who are far poorer than we—and their rate of increase greatly outstrips the rest of us.

Moreover, while there are fewer than a billion people in the richer countries of the Northern Hemisphere, there are more than 2 billion in the poorer Southern countries. "And the average wealth is 15 times as great in the rich areas as in the poor, with the gap widening steadily year by year," the author reminds us.

EVERY CHILD born in the United States uses eight times as much of our natural resources as a child born in an underdeveloped country. Americans, with only 6 per cent of the world's population, already consume more than half the world's annual production of nonrenewable resources. And this discrepancy is getting larger, not smaller.

Yet a U.S. congressional committee on foreign affairs last month recommended slashing $465,000,000 from the foreign aid bill that was already the lowest on record. This was all for "economic assistance," not for military aid, which was not cut. We give less than one-half of 1 per cent of our gross national product to foreign aid — and most of this are loans at substantial interest rates. As we get richer, we get stingier and dumber.